

## Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DODE-00 EB-08 NSAE-00 USIA-06  
TRSE-00 SOE-02 DOE-11 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07  
ACDA-12 SS-15 NSC-05 PRS-01 /078 R

\$RAFTED BY AF/S:WFEATON:DC  
APPROVED BY AF: WCHARROP  
AF/S:DKEOGH

-----046722 010009Z /73

R 310057Z DEC 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
INFO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG  
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN  
AMCONSUL DURBAN

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:BEXP, ESTC, PARM, SF

SUBJECT: AIRCRAFT SALES TO SOUTH AFRICA

REF: STATE 303846

1. THERE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN ALLEGATIONS THAT US  
ORIGIN CESSNAS AND SIMILAR LIGHT PLANES HAVE BEEN DIVERTED  
EITHER TO MILITARY OR PARAMILITARY USE WITHIN SOUTH  
AFRICA OR TO RHODESIA. THESE ALLEGATIONS HAVE LED TO  
RENEWED CALLS FOR THE US GOVERNMENT TO PROHIBIT THE EXPORT  
OF COMMERCIAL PLANES TO SOUTH AFRICA. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE  
THAT US COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT, SOLD TO PRIVATE PARTIES  
IN SOUTH AFRICA, HAVE BEEN DIVERTED FOR THE USE OF THE  
SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENSE FORCES. HOWEVER, FOR SOME YEARS  
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CRITICS OF PLANE SALES TO SOUTH AFRICA HAVE ALLEGED THAT  
US ORIGIN AIRCRAFT ARE USED BY AIR COMMANDOS WHO ARE  
CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING BORDER SURVEILLANCE OR COUNTER-  
INSURGENCY ACTIVITIES FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT.  
IN ADDITION, WHILE WE HAVE NO INDICATIONS THAT US  
MANUFACTURED CESSNAS SOLD TO SOUTH AFRICA ARE PRESENTLY  
SERVING AS MILITARY AIRCRAFT IN RHODESIA, THERE IS

EVIDENCE THAT NON US MANUFACTURED CESSNAS SOLD TO SOUTH AFRICA ARE PRESENTLY SERVING AS MILITARY AIRCRAFT

IN RHODESIA, THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT NON US MANUFACTURED CESSNAS ARE BEING USED BY RHODESIAN ARMED FORCES. RECENTLY THE BALTIMORE SUN CARRIED A STORY TRACING THE PATH OF ABOUT 25 FRENCH BUILT CESSNAS FROM FRANCE THROUGH A SPANISH FISHING COMPANY IN THE CANARY ISLANDS TO THEIR ULTIMATE DESTINATION AND USE IN MILITARY CONFIGURATION BY THE RHODESIAN ARMED FORCES. (SEE REFTTEL)

2. THE DEPARTMENT IS GIVING CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT TO WHAT STEPS THE US GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE TO ENSURE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THAT US COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT (PLANES AND HELICOPTERS) SOLD TO SOUTH AFRICA ARE USED SOLELY FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA AND NAMIBIA. WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR MORE FREQUENT END USE CHECKS, EITHER PRELICENSING OR POST-SALE, ON A RANDOM OR TARGETED BASIS. WE SEE A NEED TO DETERMINE WHETHER US AIRCRAFT EXPORTED TO SOUTH AFRICA IN PAST YEARS ARE STILL IN SOUTH AFRICA AND BEING USED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.

3. WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR VIEWS ON HOW THIS COULD BEST BE ACCOMPLISHED. PERHAPS THE DEPARTMENT COULD SUPPLY THE EMBASSY WITH A LIST OF EXPORTED AIRCRAFT, INCLUDING SERIAL NUMBER, MODEL, AND PURCHASER SO THAT EMBASSY COULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHECK REGISTRATION RECORDS TO DETERMINE THE NAME OF THE CURRENT OWNER. IF ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION REGISTRATION RECORDS WERE DENIED TO THE EMBASSY, PERHAPS A STATE OR JOINT STATE/COMMERCE TEAM MIGHT BE SENT ON TDY TO SOUTH AFRICA TO DO COMPREHENSIVE END-USER CHECKS ON PREVIOUSLY EXPORTED AIRCRAFT. GIVEN OUR CONCERN OVER THE ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL USE OF US MANUFACTURED AIRCRAFT BY AIR COMMANDOS, DEPARTMENT WOULD WELCOME ANY SUGGESTIONS EMBASSY MIGHT HAVE REGARDING PROCEDURES WHICH WOULD BAR THE USE OF PLANES FOR AIR COMMANDO PURPOSES, SUCH AS FURTHER RESTRICTIONS IN EXPORT LICENSE. WE NOTE THAT A NUMBER OF FLYING CLUBS IN SOUTH AFRICA PURCHASE AIRCRAFT. WE ARE PLANNING TO SEND TO THE EMBASSY A LIST OF THESE FLYING CLUBS AND WILL ASK THE EMBASSY TO DETERMINE IF ANY OF THESE CLUBS ARE FRONTS FOR OR HAVE ANY CONNECTION WITH THE AIR COMMANDOS.

4. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S THINKING ON THESE AND ANY OTHER ACTIONS WHICH COULD BE TAKEN TO INSURE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THAT US MANUFACTURED AIRCRAFT ARE NOT USED FOR UNAUTHORIZED PURPOSES. CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AIRCRAFT, SALES  
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**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
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**TAGS:** BEXP, ESTC, PARM, SF  
**To:** PRETORIA  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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